


MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stephanie Y. Hayden, LMSW, Director 

DATE: January 29, 2020

SUBJECT: Update on 2019 Novel Coronavirus (nCoV)

Austin Public Health (APH) is closely monitoring the outbreak caused by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (nCoV), which began in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. As of January 28, 2020, the World Health Organization reported 4,593 worldwide cases. Most cases (4,537) are reported in China, with 56 confirmed cases reported outside of China across 14 countries. Additionally, there have been 106 deaths in China. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported five confirmed cases within the United States (Washington, California, Arizona, and Illinois). There are currently no nCoV cases in Texas. However, the situation is rapidly evolving.

APH in coordination with the CDC, Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and regional and local public health and health care agencies, continue to monitor the outbreak, conduct disease surveillance, and investigate suspected Persons Under Investigation (PUI). APH is also providing guidance to health care providers on reporting, testing, specimen collection, and infection control practices to ensure that response actions follow those of CDC and DSHS.

Currently, the overall risk of nCoV to the general public is low, but staff will continue to stress the following measures as the best way to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue to cover it, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

APH is working with the City of Austin Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Travis County Office of Emergency Management to hold a situational and communication briefing on Thursday, January 30, 2020, for city and county departments, the Capital Area Trauma Regional Advisory Council, and the Capital Area Council of Government.





Staff is also preparing educational outreach material and messaging for the general public and workforce.

If you have any questions, or if I can provide additional information, please contact me at (512) 972-5010 or via email at Stephanie.Hayden@austintexas.gov.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Christopher Shorter, Assistant City Manager
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager
Mark E. Escott, Interim Health Authority

